

SOCIAL ACTION NEWS-LETTER

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A BRITISH CHRISTIAN LOOKS AT THE WORLD

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To attempt in a few hundred words to sum up the attitude of British Christians or the British Churches towards social and international affairs is an impossible task. It is typical of the English mind that it shrinks from hasty generalization and habitually understates things. So instead of trying to say what the British Churches are saying and doing, here is one Britisher's impressions of the way our thoughts are moving and expressing themselves in action.

THE SOCIALIST GOVERNMENT

The labour Government was voted in with a large majority, and it is my impression that the greater part of the country is still behind it—and this in spite of the fact that there is considerable criticism, especially among business men. The criticism centres around the delays which seem inevitable when there are still so many controls, when materials and labour are in very short supply, and when national planning is attempted. If the Labour Government can somehow manage to cut some of the red tape of bureaucracy its popularity will rise—and more than that, it will have done a wonderful job of work.

Any government which had been in office during these two years since the end of the war would have had a terribly hard time. All parties in Britain,—Labour, Conservative and Liberal,—are committed to more planning on a national basis than ever before in history. The majority of British people still think that the Labour Government is most likely to do best for the lower paid folk.

The scheme of Family Allowances which came into operation a year ago is one indication of achievement in a sound direction; another is the vast scheme of Social Insurance, Health and Pensions, which is now being worked out and will shortly come into full operation. The nationalization policy, already applied to the mines, and soon to be applied to transport both road and rail, is another indication—though one's view of its success in the long run is bound to be affected by one's social theory.

INDIA

In spite of some very grave doubts on the part of many, and not all of them imperialists, there is general approval of the Government's decision some months ago to give India her independence, and to leave to her the choice whether she will remain within the Empire as a self-governing dominion (like Canada), or whether she will go out and be a completely independent country.

Christians although they have different views amongst themselves, have always had many leaders who have worked for Indian freedom, and many of our best missionaries have been among them; to them the decision about India has been most gratifying, and even more gratifying has been the courtesy and the long patience with which the negotiations have been conducted during the last two years, starting with the Cripps Mission and ending with the appointment of the present Viceroy, Lord Mountbatten.

RUSSIA AND AMERICA

When the war ended there was a great fund of goodwill towards Russia in British hearts, and not least among British Christians. Since the war ended much of this has been dissipated by Russia's attitude in the international negotiations which have succeeded each other in the series of conferences of the last two years. The prevailing feeling now is one of puzzled bewilderment—if only Russia would show some sign of being really willing to cooperate, how much happier we should be. But, taking

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LABOR SUNDAY MATERIALS TO PASTORS

Following a custom of many years the department of Social Welfare early in August mailed to pastors a copy of the annual Labor Sunday Message of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America and a copy of the report of the National Study Conference on the Churches and Economic Life, held under the auspices of the Council at Pittsburgh, Pa., February 17-19, 1947. As a result of that conference the former division of industrial relations of the council was raised to the level of a department, with Dr. Cameron P. Hall executive secretary and James Myers, long-time industrial relations secretary, as secretary-emeritus.

COMMISSION ON CHURCH AND ECONOMIC LIFE

By action of the board of trustees a Commission on the Church and Economic Life has been created for the purpose of giving study to such problems as labor-management relations, industrial disputes, strikes and lockouts, unemployment, and other industrial problems, with a view to determining the principles of Christian ethics involved.

The membership of the Commission is limited to twelve persons and its activities will be under the direction of the department of Social Welfare. While the personnel of the commission is not complete, the following persons have been appointed by the board of trustees of the Society:

Dr. Edwin A. Elliott, Fort Worth, Texas, for many years regional director of the National Labor Relations Board, a specialist in labor economics, and an elder in the University Church.

Mr. C. O. McAfee, Macon, Georgia, candy manufacturer. Mr. McAfee's corporation signed a contract with its employees meeting the union's demands as to wages, hours and working conditions. In his plant there is no segregation or discrimination as to race or color. All employees belong to the same union, work side by side and enjoy the same privileges.

Joe Gividen, Middletown, Ohio. Former president of an independent union of steel workers and chairman of the board of the First Christian Church, Middletown.

Dr. Floyd Faust, pastor Broad Street Church of Christ, Columbus, Ohio. Dr. Faust has for many years been active in promoting better labor-management-church relations in his city.

Al Whitehouse, Covington, Kentucky, district supervisor of United Steel Workers Union and president of the Kentucky CIO Council. Chairman of the board of the Latonia Christian Church.

Dr. Joe Belcastro, Columbus, Ohio, pastor of the East Columbus Church of Christ, an industrial church. Has given serious study to labor problems.

Larry Brandon, Indianapolis, Indiana, official of Indiana Farm Bureau Cooperative Association and Chairman, Board of Elders, University Park Christian Church.

The remaining members of the commission will be announced when acceptances have been received. The commission will be advisory to the department of Social Welfare and will be under the administrative direction of its executive secretary.

It is anticipated that the commission will devote itself to an exploration of areas of agreement and disagreement in economic relationships, to seeking the basic causes of industrial tensions, and to an attempt to discover and apply the principles of the Christian gospel to our present economic situation. It is expected that the commission will follow to some extent the pattern set by the Commission on Re-Study of the Disciples, in that it will seek to discover areas of disagreement and the causes of tension, and will set forth its findings in a series of reports for brotherhood consideration.

SOCIAL ACTION NEWS - LETTER

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MRS. ESTES LOANED TO CHURCH WORLD SERVICE

At the request of Church World Service, Inc., the board of trustees of the Society on July 28, agreed to permit Mrs. Ruth D. Estes, national director of church and community service in the department of Social Welfare, to give a period of from three to four months to the task of organizing rural areas on an interdenominational, communitywide basis to secure contributions of grain, foodstuffs, hides, wool, cotton, etc., for relief purposes. Information being received from the World Council of Churches headquarters in Geneva indicate that conditions of hunger and misery in many of the devastated areas will be greater in the coming winter than last winter. The recent session of the International Cereals Conference, held in Paris, warned that no more than 32,000,000 tons of grain will be available this year to meet the need of 50,000,000 tons. This means that unless there is a more equitable distribution there will be widespread hunger and starvation in war-devastated areas. The staggering deficit of 18,000,000 tons means a deficit of many hundreds of millions of loaves of bread for which hungry children, adults and old people will be crying this winter.

Mrs. Estes will continue to maintain her office in Missions Building, Indianapolis, while on this special task. Certain plans for developing a program of community service for local churches will have to be postponed because of the emergency, but the program of material aid will continue under the direction of a person to be temporarily employed.

MILK GOATS FOR JAPAN

At the request of Dr. Toyohiko Kagawa and Protestant missionaries now working in Japan, the Heifer Project Committee, sponsored by the Brethren Service Committee, has undertaken to secure the contribution of a large number of milk goats for Japan. Goats are particularly adaptable to conditions in Japan, due to their ability to live on the rough grasses and leaves of trees and yet produce quantities of milk. It is said that an average milk goat will produce about 750 quarts of milk the first year of production. Arrangements have been made with the U. S. Army to transport contributed animals to Japan, where distribution will be made by the Ministry of Public Health and Welfare. Providing goats is said to be the most economical and effective way to get milk to the starving children of that country. Through their offspring these animals also add to the national economy. Further information may be secured by writing the Department of Social Welfare, 222 South Downey Ave., Indianapolis 7, Indiana.

LINENS TO POLAND

In response to a call for linens to go to the Union of the Churches of Christ in Poland, delegates to the International and World Conventions contributed 93 full-sized sheets, 142 pillow slips, 160 turkish towels, 1 sheet blanket, 35 huck and dish towels, 44 wash cloths, 3 combs, 2 bars of soap, 6 pairs of men's shorts, and one dress. These articles were packed and shipped from Memorial Auditorium, Buffalo, at the close of the World Convention.

CHARGES WAR DEPARTMENT VIOLATES LAW

Walter W. Sikes

Asserting "the evidence shows that the War Department is using Government funds in an improper manner for propaganda activities supporting compulsory military training," the House Committee on Expenditures in the Executive Departments adopted unanimously the second Report of its subcommittee appointed to study the propaganda activities of the War Department. The Report was sent to Attorney General, Hon. Tom C. Clark, on July 23, calling attention of the Department of Justice to what it calls "improper and unlawful activities of Federal officials and employees of the War Department in propagandizing for legislation."

The Report cites the United States Code, section 201, title 18 (quoted in part in *Social Action News-Letter*, June, 1947), which forbids the use of Federal funds to influence directly or indirectly legislative action. It summarizes the finding of the subcommittee and offers to the Department of Justice its files of evidence.

This Report confines itself to one aspect of the issue, namely, the activities of War Department personnel and of civilian employees intended to "build up a federally stimulated public demand upon Congress" for UMT.

There are two grave dangers involved in the present activities of the War Department, according to the report. One is the prostitution of public confidence in government representatives. While citizens are naturally wary of statements made by special interest groups, "it is the authority and the supposed objectivity of Government" which leads him to trust the statements of federal officials. This trust is betrayed by the War Department, the Committee finds, because it slants and distorts facts, "designed, in most instances, to make the individual believe he is thinking for himself."

The other danger cited is that of the destruction of freedom by providing public funds with which government agencies may establish undue influence over the minds of the people by the creation and use of channels of propaganda and publicity in support of the action the agency desires.

THE METHODS BEING USED

The investigation was not concerned with the merits of pending legislation (in fact, certain members of the committee are distinguished for the long advocacy of compulsory military training). The Report is rather a partial analysis of the types of methods being used by the War Department in violation of federal law.

The War Department is charged with maintaining a staff of civilian employees hired to propagandize for universal military training. Specifically cited is the case of Alan Coutts, who traveled in War Department airplanes to speak in 17 states on platform and radio, receiving \$25 per day plus travel. In his addresses he urged the public to write to the radio station involved, assuring them that their messages "would be forwarded to proper congressional authorities."

Another case is that of Mrs. Arthur Woods, hired and paid by the War Department specifically to influence "women and parents of the country on the virtues of compulsory military training." Indeed, Assistant Secretary of War Howard C. Peterson testified before the subcommittee that civilians were employed "to sell the program to the public with the hope that the public would sell it to the Congress." Evidence was also presented to show that this means was used to influence members of Congress directly through lobbying by preparing materials for a "citizens Committee" set up for that purpose and headed by Justice Owen Roberts.

As to the types of unlawful activities being carried on by military employees of the War Department, the Report cites a motion picture film called a "Plan for Peace," prepared and distributed at a cost of some \$50,000 to the tax-payers, designed and used to influence legislation for UMT. Another film is in preparation to show the UMT unit at Fort Knox. "The scenario shows the most

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ON SOCIAL FRONTIERS

Labor-Management Study Course Available

The Department of the Church and Economic Life, of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, announces the publication of a study pamphlet designed for individual adults, young adults, teachers of classes, students in seminaries, and leaders of organizations, based upon the work of the Pittsburgh conference on The Church and Economic Life held last February. The pamphlet is 80 pages in length and comprises six chapters, plus suggestions for group leaders and for further reading. It is recommended for local church study groups and classes, conference groups, and general use. Copies 35c from this office.

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Industrial Statesmanship?

That increased prices announced by General Motors is unjustified is the assertion of Walter Reuther, head of the United Automobile Workers Union, who points out that the company's earnings in the second quarter of 1947 amounted to \$92,000,000, as compared to the previous record of \$69,000,000 in 1928. If the company would be satisfied with an 8 percent return instead of the 21 percent represented by the \$92,000,000 earnings, prices on cars, instead of being increased could be reduced from \$125 to \$150 on a \$1500 car. Commenting on this situation, Thomas L. Stokes, national news commentator says, "The managers of private enterprise, who give it such fine lip service, seem by their actions to be predicting its doom."

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"Piker Stuff"

Describing the parties given to Army officers and governmental representatives by John Meyers, publicity man for the Howard Hughes' interests as "piker stuff," James O'Neill, Jr., in the *Washington Daily News* of August 7, quotes unnamed Washington hotel men as saying that "the expenses of a country club member of any standing would have amounted to more than Meyer spent entertaining these people." The biggest spenders, hotel men told O'Neill, are the automobile, steel, machine and medicine manufacturers. Washington representatives of large companies, most of whom have comfortable government contracts, spend upwards of \$10,000 a year just passing out goodwill, with some accounts going as high as \$25,000 per year. An assistant manager of one hotel said that parties with Congressmen present usually cost the most, with \$400 representing an evening's entertainment for some of them. Whatever the merits of the investigation of the Hughes' interests, persons "in the know" in Washington believe that a much more odorous kettle of fish could be opened up by a general Congressional investigation of corporations angling for government war contracts.

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How to Prevent Strikes

That a guaranteed annual wage for industrial workers is not only feasible but possible is the conclusion reached by a staff of experts and presented to the Advisory Board of the Office of War Mobilization and Reconversion. The report declares that both workers and the general public will benefit from a guaranteed annual wage system, that such a program will develop security for the economic machine of the nation and will be a force for peace and better relations between management and labor. The investigators found that of 184 guaranteed wage systems on which information is available, eleven have been in operation for 25 years. These eleven survived the economic depressions of 1920, 1929, and 1937. A guaranteed wage system would have avoided the \$300 billion loss of real income due to involuntary idleness in the twelve years following 1929, say the experts, by keeping workers employed and providing a 22 percent increase in consumption. This, in turn, would have prevented the wave of bankruptcies and liquidations that wiped out the equities of many investors. It would have prevented also the slump in farm prices which drove American agriculture to the verge of insolvency. Such a plan would also prove a stimulus to initiative, says the report, since businessmen, knowing that wages would go on during shut-downs, would exercise greater ingenuity to plants going. Removal of the fear element from labor-management relations would serve to provide stability and a high production rate.

STATE COMMISSIONS ON SOCIAL ACTION PLANNED

After several years of study of the best means of promoting social action in states and areas, the Commission of Christian Service of the Home and State Missions Planning Council at its meeting in St. Louis, Mo., in May recommended that state commissions on Christian Service be set up in every state and area in the brotherhood. Several states have already taken steps to comply with the suggestion of the Council. Georgia has the honor of being the first to develop such a commission under the joint sponsorship of the state board and the state board of missionary organizations-education.

The plan proposed by the Home and State Missions Planning Council calls for a commission set up jointly by the state mission board, the state board or commission on Christian education (where these exist separately), and the state board of missionary organizations-education. Each board should appoint one or more members to the commission, depending upon the number of persons comprising the commission.

The purposes of the commission are several. It should serve as a social education and social action group for the churches of the state or area. To it should be committed responsibility for developing awareness of social issues before the state and the churches in the local community. It would, for example, be aware of legislation proposed to curb the liquor and gambling evils in the state, of measures to reduce juvenile delinquency, divorce, crime, etc., and would keep the churches informed of these questions. Members of the commission would presumably report frequently to their own boards and thus keep these agencies informed on social issues. A third function should be to serve as a channel through which national agencies can reach the state and local church groups. The department of Social Welfare of The United Christian Missionary Society, to which was committed responsibility for promoting the organization of these commissions, would use them as cooperating channels for getting information to local churches. Organizations of such commissions would bring a large number of voluntary workers into action and would thus relieve state administrators of a multitude of detail in connection with these problems.

TAFT OPPOSES PEACETIME CONSCRIPTION

Despite the fact that he is widely viewed as a candidate for the Republican nomination for the Presidency, Senator Robert A. Taft has made public over his signature a statement declaring definite opposition to peace time conscription and compulsory military training "in the absence of some real threat of a new war."

In a letter addressed to James A. Crain, in response to a communication on the subject of peacetime conscription, Senator Taft wrote,

"I am definitely opposed to peacetime conscription and compulsory universal military training, in the absence of some real threat of a new war. In my opinion, such a policy is an infringement of the freedom for which we have fought every war since 1776. Furthermore, it is not the best method of obtaining a modern army and is tremendously expensive. I think military men should be granted the right to advise on the character and size of the army and navy needed for the safety of the country, but that Congress should meet these needs. I do not think their opinion should be blindly accepted on a question affecting so vitally the life and freedom of the civilian population."

The last two sentences quoted should be read in the light of the unanimous report of the House committee on expenditures in the executive departments, which charges "that the War Department is using Government funds in an improper manner for propaganda activities supporting compulsory military training, or what is commonly referred to as 'universal military training.'" As a potential candidate for the nomination for the Presidency Mr. Taft may be presumed to know something about the state of public opinion on this issue. Presidential candidates do not often deliberately make statements they know to be offensive to public opinion.

A BRITISH CHRISTIAN LOOKS AT THE WORLD [Cont. from p. 1 Col. 1] into account her immense achievements during the last thirty years, and the enormous tasks of social and economic reconstruction which she has had to face after the revolution and now again since the German invasion, it is still hard to understand her policy and fatally easy to accept the sinister interpretations of it which are all too readily given us in our anti-communist press.

There is great caution and some cynicism in our attitude to UN. Compared with the enthusiasm for the League of Nations in the years following 1919, there is now a tendency to doubt if anything can be achieved—people are realistic to the point of suspicion.

British Christians are conscious of the great debt our country owes to the United States, but there is a tough independence which shrinks from being "tied to the wheel of American capitalism," as it is sometimes expressed. Just as it is hard for British imaginations to appreciate the hunger and destitution on the continent of Europe; so it is hard for Americans to realise the stringency of British rations, of food and clothing especially. To a Britisher coming to America for the first time the contrast is staggering—the abundance of food and clothing unrationed is a complete contrast to conditions in Britain; and further the high level of expenditure on food and luxuries here is unknown to the ordinary middle-class Britisher, and in America it is all taken for granted as a natural right.

Surely our leaders can do something to even things up, though the way it is to be done is beyond the ordinary person.

WITHIN THE CHURCHES

Within the British Churches two things may be mentioned as outstanding. One is the way in which during the war the issue of Pacifism rarely became a source of bitterness and conflict. In the main pacifist and non-pacifist Christians agreed to differ. Often within the same family one son took one view and the other the opposite. This has meant a good deal of control on the part of enthusiastic pacifists, and not a little sense of frustration; but it was a fine achievement. To-day both groups are working together in social and international projects.

There is great concern about the Family. With divorces increasing rapidly, with the increase also of illegitimacy, and venereal disease, Christians of all Churches are doing more to demonstrate the necessity of Christian ideals in marriage, the need for sex education and pre-marital instruction, both in schools and Youth Clubs, in the family itself and by Christian ministers.

The British Council of Churches, through its appropriate department, has issued a booklet on the Family; and Marriage Guidance Councils have been set up in different parts of the country.

Finally, there is a growing sense of the importance of dealing with social and economic issues as an outcome of the Christian doctrine of man, as an element in a truly Christian order; and also of the significance of social and economic issues as forming the background for evangelism—we preach to men and women whose minds have been formed in such and such a social setting, and unless that setting is Christianised the work of preaching is made far more difficult. Accordingly, both Evangelism and Social Christianity are necessary—they are not antagonistic but complementary.

NEGROES SUE FOR EQUAL FACILITIES

An unprecedented move to secure equality of tax-supported recreational facilities has been initiated in Newport News, Va., with a suit in a Federal court asking that the city be ordered either to open existing facilities to Negroes or else to provide "similar and equal accommodations" for its Negro citizens. The suit has special reference to the "World War Memorial Recreational Building," constructed with public funds in 1944, but so far denied to the use of Negroes. The suit was brought by the local chapter of the NAACP.

GREENVILLE VERDICT STIRS INTEREST IN ANTI-LYNCHIN BILL

The mass acquittal at Greenville, South Carolina, of twenty eight men indicted for the lynching of Willie Earle, twenty-six of them confessed participants in the mob, has greatly increased interest in the enactment of a Federal Anti-Lynching law. Many who formerly felt that the states had both the right and ability to punish lynchers felt the ground cut from beneath their feet by this and similar verdicts and now frankly favor national anti-lynching legislation.

Meantime probably as good a measure as could be devised for the purpose is now pending in Congress, in H. R. 3488 and S. B. 1352. Defining lynching as "violence upon the person or property of any citizen because of race, creed, color, national origin, ancestry, language or religion," this bill declares complicity or participation in such violence to be a felony punishable by imprisonment up to twenty years and a maximum fine of \$10,000. Officers found guilty of it may be imprisoned for five years and fined \$5,000, or both. A county or other governmental unit where a lynching occurs is made liable for heavy damages to the victim or his next of kin, unless it can prove that no official negligence was involved.

The Attorney General of the United States would be made responsible for the investigation of all cases involving violations of the act, and such cases would be tried in Federal District Courts. (Interracial Notes)

CHARGES WAR DEPARTMENT VIOLATES LAW [Cont. from p. 2, col. 2] subtle of propaganda technique," the Committee states, in support of UMT.

A second type of misuse of public funds cited is the establishment within the War Department of a Women's Interest Unit," set up to prepare and distribute propaganda favorable to the interests of the Department among leaders of numerous women's organizations. There is also "an advisory council to the unit," composed of representatives of representatives of women's groups across the country—church, labor, education, and professional clubs. At a meeting of this council in the Pentagon Building, November 14, 1946, Lt. Gen. Joseph Lawton Collins told them that they were concerned with the attitude of Congress to "our program."

Evidence showed also that military personnel mapped out the program of the witnesses appearing before the President's Advisory Commission on Military Training and obtained the execution of these plans through civilian employees. Commenting on the materials prepared in this collaboration, the Report declares that some of it "followed a pattern unworthy of any Department of the Government."

The final type of propaganda activity mentioned in this brief summary has to do with the use of the UMT unit at Fort Knox. The War Department has brought "many people of all walks of life" at government expense to be conducted through the unit by "selected guides" whose business was to "sell the virtues of the plan."

Copies of the Report may be had from the Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., or from the Committee itself as mentioned above. It is House Report No. 1073 of the 80th Congress.

The matter seems to rest now with the Department of Justice. Christian citizens concerned with the threats to freedom involved in these illegal activities should address their communications to the Attorney General. Inasmuch as the subcommittee indicates that its investigations may not be complete, communications may also be addressed to Congress, Forest A. Harness, Chairman, House Office Building, Washington, D. C.

USABLE RESOURCE MATERIAL

"Cross-Roads of American Foreign Policy," an official statement of the Commission on a Just and Durable Peace submitted to and approved by the executive committee of the Federal Council of Churches, 10c each; \$4.50 per 100, from this office.